

Upper Extremity Infection Related to Intravenous Drug Use - Considering the true cost of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown

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Background

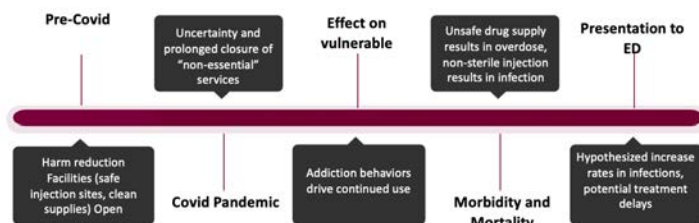
- Skin and soft tissue infections are the third most common emergency department diagnosis
- Frequently associated with intravenous drug use (IVDU)
- Most commonly isolated species are gram positive skin flora, including *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus pyogenes*

Treatment

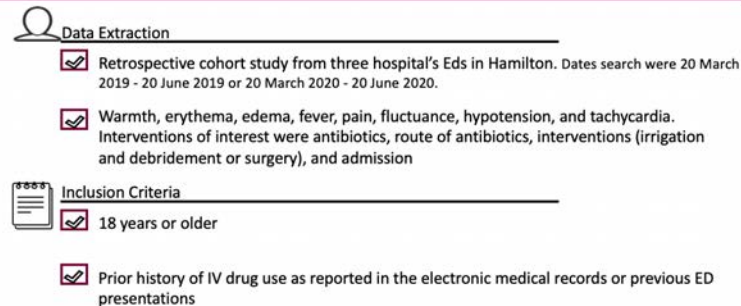
- Most SSTI can be treated with antibiotics
- Sometimes require I+D
- Plastic surgery involvement reserved for deeper infections (eg. flexor teno) or necrotizing SSTI

Cost

- Study at St. Paul's demonstrated greater ED healthcare utilization
- More ED visits and hospital admissions
- Average cost of \$610.33 per day



Methods



Results

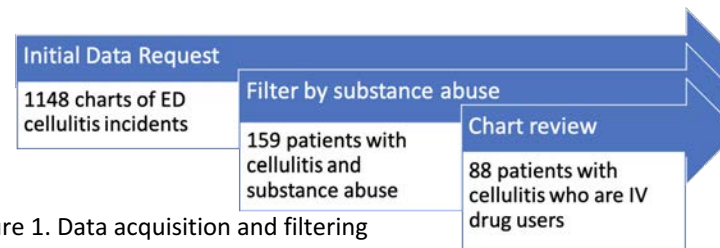
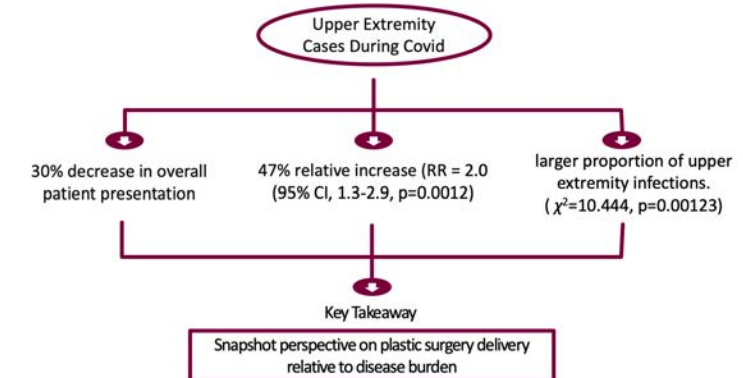


Figure 1. Data acquisition and filtering

Cases	2019	2020
Non-IVDU	533	373
IVDU	36	53
M	0.66	0.85
F	0.34	0.15
Median Age	33	34
Avg Symptoms	3.23	4.74

Table 1. Upper Extremity Infections in IVDU before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Discussion

- Opioid overdose deaths have steadily increased by 40% after declining in 2019 during the pandemic in Canada
- Larger proportion of patients presenting with upper extremity infections had a history of IV drug use during the pandemic period (12%) compared to the pre-COVID-19 period (6%)
- Large economic cost associated with increasing infections can provide justification for harm reduction programs
- This study does not identify changes in the severity of disease presentation or elucidate an identifiable reason as why there may have been an increase

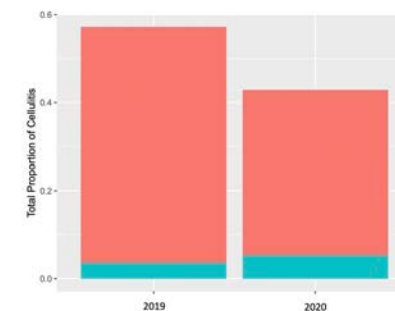


Figure 2. Proportion of UE cellulitis attributable to IVDU and non-IVDU patient populations before and during the COVID-19 pandemic



THANK YOU

